

working with us to oppose Iran's nuclear program. These sanctions have a potential to split our allies, aiding Iran, something I'm sure supporters of this bill would not want to do. Congress and the President should have a united front against Iran and enacting legislation that threatens that unity is not in our best interests.

Additionally, Title II urges managers of U.S. pension plans to divest stocks of companies that report investments in Iran's energy sector. These provisions could negatively affect the smooth functioning of U.S. capital markets and the savings and investment flows that are essential to economic growth.

We must send Iran a strong signal with a united front. I urge passage of this bill because we must address the very real threat of the nuclear arms race in the Middle East stemming from Iran's irresponsible actions. The current regime in Iran must be held accountable for its threatening behavior even as we support a transition to democracy and tolerance in Iran.

**BETHEL AFRICAN METHODIST  
EPISCOPAL CHURCH**

**HON. JIM GERLACH**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 27, 2006*

Mr. GERLACH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church on the occasion of its 135 years of continuing service.

On April 23, 2006, Bethel African Methodist Church, the oldest African-American church in Pottstown, Pennsylvania, will celebrate its 135th anniversary. Bethel had a very humble beginning. While the Church was initiated in 1869, original members of the Church began holding worship services for many years in local homes. It was not until 1871 that the Church marked its formal founding as an African Methodist Episcopal Church. During 1871, the Church also moved into its present and only sanctuary. Many renovations, upgrades, and membership additions have helped the Church grow, but members still turn to their original roots for strength and stability.

Over twenty pastors have served the congregation of Bethel and their current pastor, the Reverend Dr. Vernon Ross, Jr., has helped provide both spiritual and community growth. Through his leadership, Bible studies and Sunday school have grown tremendously and over 100 new members have found a new church home. Bethel has taken the initiative to create an after-school program, a women's and men's ministry, and a program to facilitate Christian education. They have also added a youth/young adult choice program and expanded the voice mass choir. In addition to this growth, the congregation remains focused on its missionary and lay organizations and has added to its outreach ministry by using church vans to stay involved in the community.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me today in honoring Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church on the wonderful occasion of its 135th anniversary. Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church is committed to serving its community and is carrying out its mission to minister to the spiritual needs of the people of the greater Pottstown community in a most extemporaneous fashion.

**RECOGNIZING THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY  
OF THE INDEPENDENCE OF  
GUYANA**

**HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 27, 2006*

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 40th anniversary of the independence of the nation of Guyana from Great Britain and to enter a tribute to the relationship between Guyana and the United States into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

On May 26, 1966 the people of Guyana rejoined in their newfound freedom status and embarked on their journey of establishing independent statehood. Guyana officially became a republic on February 23, 1970. The transition to independence was not an easy one but the people of Guyana persevered and sustained as their nation evolved into a country of peace and prosperity.

The Caribbean is a diverse region that includes some of the hemisphere's richest and poorest nations. Among the 16 independent nations of the Caribbean, Guyana sits poised on the north central coast of South America. United States interest in Guyana and other Caribbean nations include economic, political and security concerns. Guyana has long been recognized as a vital partner to the U.S. on security, trade, health, the environment, education, and regional democracy.

Mr. Speaker: In the spirit of friendship and cooperation I congratulate Guyana on the occasion of their 40th anniversary of independence and I enter into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD a statement submitted by the Ambassador of Guyana, the Honorable Bayney Karran.

**THE TRIBUTE**

As a former British colony Guyana shares a similar historical, linguistic, religious and socio-political heritage with the United States. Moreover, as a member state of the Organization of American States (OAS), Guyana is a solid partner and ally of the United States at the hemispheric and the wider international levels in advancing mutual interests and addressing common challenges. In remarking upon the status of the bilateral relationship in 2003, President George W. Bush stated, "The United States and Guyana enjoy a strong and productive partnership. . . . (The interests of the Guyanese people) and those of the United States are closely aligned. . . . Working together to further our shared goals, we will build ever stronger bonds between our two countries".

Those bonds were evident when Guyana, aided by the combined efforts of former Presidents George H.W. Bush and Jimmy Carter to bring about free and fair elections, emerged from the clutches of authoritarianism and returned to the fold of democratic nations in 1992. Guyana has always collaborated unstintingly with the United States to combat the scourges which pose challenges to democracy, development, human rights, peace and security.

The following are some useful indicators of Guyana's level of friendship and cooperation with the United States:

The Fight Against Drugs: Guyana recently extended an invitation to the DEA to open an office in Guyana after the DEA was made to depart neighboring Venezuela. The United States has responded positively to the invitation. Guyana has also concluded a Shiprider Agreement with the United States.

Free Trade: Guyana and the United States were in mutual agreement at the Fourth Summit of the Americas that the Free Trade Area of the Americas should proceed to be implemented.

Good Governance and Governability: Guyana's classification as a Threshold Country by the Millennium Challenge Corporation underlines its determination to improve its performance in ruling justly, investing in people and encouraging economic freedom.

Terrorism: Guyana suffered proportionately the heaviest losses in human casualties of any country including the United States from the 9/11 airplane attacks. Of a population of 750,000, 25 Guyanese nationals perished at the World Trade Center and one at the Pentagon.

HIV/AIDS: Guyana is a beneficiary country under the PEPFAR (President's Emergency Plans for AIDS Relief) Program.

Trafficking in Persons: The 2005 TIP Report which elevated Guyana from a Tier 3 to a Tier 2 country referred to appreciable progress by Guyana in complying with standards for the elimination of trafficking in persons.

International Criminal Court: Guyana has signed an Article 98 agreement with the United States.

Inter-American Agenda: As a member of the Inter-American System, Guyana shares policies and programs with the United States and other states in the hemisphere as set out, for example, in the OAS Charter, the Inter-American Democratic Charter, the Declaration on Hemispheric Security and other Conventions of the Inter-American System.

Above all, however, lasting bonds of friendship and cooperation between Guyana and the United States have been nurtured and strengthened by our respective people. The United States is home to a large Guyanese Diaspora which makes significant contributions to both Guyanese and American societies.

**BAYNEY KARRAN,**  
*Ambassador of Guyana.*

**RECOGNIZING AFRICA MALARIA  
DAY**

**HON. BETTY MCCOLLUM**

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 27, 2006*

Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Africa Malaria Day and express my support and admiration for the determined public health officials, NGOs, clinicians and communities that are working to defeat this preventable disease that takes its greatest toll on the pregnant women and children of Africa.

Each year, 300–500 million people in Africa contract malaria. One to three million Africans will unnecessarily die. Every thirty seconds an African child under the age of five dies. Nearly four percent of all maternal deaths annually are the result of malaria. The battle against malaria is ranked as the second highest global disease burden in Africa.

Despite these tragic statistics, there is great hope for beating the disease and reducing the human cost it inflicts. Through contributions and collaborations of the public and private sectors, great strides have been made in the fight against malaria. Insecticide treated nets have been distributed to the vulnerable populations in pilot projects. Another project